CIVIL WAR DAY BY DAY, FIFTY YEARS AGO

Thrilling Events of the Creat Struggle Graphically Described | Daring Land Exploits of Union and Confederate Forces Reviewed

FACING INEVITABLE, LEE CHEERS TROOPS.
February 15.

Fifty years ago today Gen. Lee, at Petersburg, weighted down by the heavy cares imposed upon him by his command, and facing the inevitable end of the war, was endeavoring to sustain the spirit of his troops by setting an example of patient and uncomplaining endurance.

Lee realized better than did his men that the Confederacy was doomed, and that his own position at Petersburg could not be held many more weeks. Yet nearly every day he was out on the lines, occasionally passing pleasantries with his generals and often speaking an encouraging word to the soldiers in the trenches.

One of his men has left a word picture of him at that trying period of his command. He was neatly attired in regulation gray, but without the general's white buff collar and cuffs. A turndown collar, of the same material as the coat, bore three stars; but there was no gold wreath around them, nor any gold lace upon the sleeves. Ordinarily a full-dress uniform would have given him four parallel cords forming an elaborate chevron, with the initials C. S. A.

With the modest suggestion of rank on his collar, he might have been mistaken for a colonel in his best fatigue suit if the triplicate arrangement in the two rows of buttons on his breast were overlooked. His hat was a soft black felt; in the summer he had been seen along the lines with a white straw.

His hair and full beard were both short. His complexion was of a healthy, ruddy hue, indicating a temperate life. He was six feet tall, well proportioned and with a fearless look of self-possession, without a trace of arrogance. The bright, sincere, even sympathetic, expression of the eye inspired a feeling of confidence and comradeship in which one forgot to note its color.

Such was Lee in 1865.

Lee Under Fire.

A rigid disciplinarian, Lee issued sharp orders; but he so blended them with touches of sympathetic thoughtfulness and little acts of kindness as to make him loved by his men. On one occasion, when going the rounds, his attention was called by Gen. Archibald Gracie—one of the Confederate generals who had won distinction at Chickamauga—to a slight change in the Union lines in front of Colquitt's salient.

In spite of Gracie's appeals to him to keep under cover Lee stepped to an exposed position on the Confederate lines, where many men had been picked off by the Federal sharpshooters, and in a leisurely manner examined the enemy's works. In the course of this examination Lee turned to find that Gracie was standing with him. He said: "Gen. Gracie, I think you ought not to expose yourself here; let's go down."

This incident occurred late in November of 1864. Scarcely a week afterward, on December 3, Gen. Gracie was killed near the spot where Lee had stood. He had just received a furlough to visit his wife and child in Richmond, but had missed his train and was waiting over for the next.

Lee was at this time general-in-chief of all the Confederate armies. He had been raised to that rank by congress on February 6, but it was an honor conferred too late to be of any use to the Confederacy. Other than Lee's own force at Petersburg there was now no body of Confederate troops worthy of the name army. In the Carolinas, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston with a few thousand men was endeavoring to find some way of stopping the Federals under Sherman. He was doomed to failure.

Letters to His Wife.

Lee knew well that all hope of maintaining the Confederacy was gone. Yet that did not deter him from taking every measure within his power to ward off final disaster as long as possible; and his every thought was for his men.

His home letters in this gloomy period are touching sidelights on Lee, the man. Some of them have been published in Fitzhugh Lee's life of Gen. Lee (Great Commanders Series, D. Appleton & Co., N. Y.).

"I received the box with hat, gloves and socks," he wrote to Mrs. Lee one day in that bleak winter, "also the barrel of apples. You had better have kept the latter, as it would have been more useful to you than to me, and I should have enjoyed its consumption by yourself and the girls more than by me."

Gives Warning of the End.

On February 2 Lee gave veiled warning of the impending downfall of the Confederate cause to his wife.

"After sending my note this morning," he wrote, "I received from the express office a bag of socks (for the soldiers). You will have to send down your offerings as soon as you can and bring your work to a close, for I think Gen. Grant will move against us soon—within a week if nothing prevents—and no man can tell what may be the result; but, trusting to a merciful God, who does not always give the battle to the strong, I pray we may not be overwhelmed.

"I shall, however, endeavor to do my duty and fight to the last. Should it be necessary to abandon our position to prevent being surrounded, what will you do? Will you remain or leave the city? You must consider the question and make up your mind. It is a fearful condition, and we must rely for guidance and protection upon a kind Providence."

But it was seldom he wrote of himself or of the cause. Nearly always it was of his men. "The Lyons furs and the fur robes have * * * arrived safely," he wrote on one occasion, "but I can learn nothing of the saddle of mutton. Bryan, of whom I inquired as to its arrival, is greatly alarmed lest it has been sent to the soldiers' dinner. If the soldiers get it I shall be content. I can do very well without it. In fact, I should rather they would have it than I."

FEDERAL FORCES ARRIVE AT COLUMBIA, S. C.
February 16.

Fifty years ago today the Federal forces under Gen. W. T. Sherman were in front of Columbia, S. C., the State capital, which they were to enter the next morning. In the succeeding night the place was to be devastated by fire.

Within the city all was panic. Gen. G. T. Beauregard, the Confederate commander, had at hand scarcely 4,000 men, and in all the Carolinas there was a bare 15,000 available to contest the advance of the confident and victorious Federals. Already Beauregard had announced his intention of evacuating Columbia early the following morning, and the people were flocking from the city, carrying with them all the valuables that could be loaded upon the carriages or crowded into the railroad cars.

The right wing of the Federal army, comprising the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Corps, under Gen. O. O. Howard, already was in part across the forks of the Congaree River, a mile or so above Columbia. Only Broad River lay between the army and the city, and in the night a brigade—Col. George A. Stone's, of Wood's Division of the Fifteenth Corps—was to be ferried across on pontoons preparatory to laying a bridge the next day.

The left wing of the army, comprising the Fourteenth and Twentieth Corps, under Gen. H. W. Slocum, was nearing the town of Alston, about twenty-five miles north of Columbia. Gen. Judson Kilpatrick's cavalry was scattered out in front of Slocum's wing.

With Columbia in sight, the bitterness of the Federal troops toward South Carolina, the State that had begun the war by announcing her secession from the Union and by firing upon the Stars and Stripes over Fort Sumter, waxed stronger. Already heavy reprisals had been made upon the people by burning their homes and plundering their personal property, and now the men muttered threats against the community before them.

Doom of Columbia Decided.

Capt. George W. Pepper, in his story of the campaign, wrote of the intent of the men to burn the city when they entered it.

"From our camp," he wrote, "the whole city was in plain view. No troops, save a few skirmishers along the river, or citizens, could be seen on the streets or about the town. I remarked to a captain of artillery that the Confederates could make us scatter by opening a battery on our camp and the columns of troops marching on the road within musket shot of the town.

"'So they could; and I hope they will fire at us,' he replied. 'We wish for a good excuse to blow the infernal town to the devil, and will do so on the first provocation. They know better, however, and will not disturb our sleep tonight.'"

Near the Federal camps and close by the road along which the Fifteenth army Corps was marching were the remains of Camp Sorghum, a Confederate prison for Federal officers, which had only recently been abandoned.

This camp, though occupying less space than sufficient for 500 men, was crowded with 1,300 officers during the months of September and October, 1864. The men had been without huts or shelter of any kind, but eventually had been supplied with a few axes and shovels with which they had dug cellars and constructed conical earth huts.

"As stories about the starvation of prisoners, sick, dying for want of attention, in the burning sun, were related by the escaped prisoners to the crowds of soldiers visiting this camp, they became furious with rage against Columbia," wrote Capt. Pepper.

"The feeling of the Army of the Tennessee is well illustrated by a profane and ferocious doggerel, which was sung by hundreds in the Fifteenth Army Corps:

"'Hail Columbia, happy land,
If I don't burn you I'll be d——d!'

"The doom of Columbia was decided at Camp Sorghum, and neither Gen. Sherman nor any other man could save it from severe treatment."

Federals Ply the Torch.

The coming of the Federals had been heralded several days before by dense columns of black smoke that arose on the southern horizon, where many acres of pine forest land and hundreds of dwellings and barns were in flames.

For miles the army had marched on roads flanked by furiously burning woods, which had been set ablaze accidentally or otherwise.

"It was grand and sometimes awful to see the flames flying over the ground like a frightened steed," wrote Maj. George W. Nichols, of Sherman's staff, in "The Story of the Great March." "As we approached one of these forests, filled with flames and pitch-black smoke, it appeared as if we were about to realize the imaginations of childhood and see dragons and terrible beasts guarding the entrance to some forbidden ground."

When the Fifteenth Corps marched into the little village of Saluda, three or four miles above Columbia, the torch was freely used. The Columbia mills, employing about 400 operatives, mostly women, said to have been the largest factory in the South, was soon in flames. The fire was fanned by a stiff breeze and flying sparks ignited some of the near-by dwellings. Amidst the smoke and flames the frightened women, their sole means of support gone, wept and wrung their hands.

That night, when the army was in sight of Columbia, a Federal battery opened fire upon the city. Sherman at once rode up and ordered the firing stopped. He did not wish the responsibility for the death of defenseless women and children. He did allow a few shells to be exploded over the railroad depot, in the suburbs, in order to frighten off the negroes who were looting the Confederate commissary stores, of which Sherman was much in need, and which he hoped to capture the next day.

It was a night of feverish anxiety in Columbia. The civilians, especially the women, were loath to believe that their city must fall, and trusted to the last that Beauregard and his handful of troops would be able to stand off the Federals. But with the dawn their greatest fears were to be realized; the Confederates were to withdraw and "the monster Sherman" was to march in.

COLUMBIA, S. C., DEVASTATED BY CONFLAGRATION.
February 17.

Fifty years ago today the city of Columbia, the capital of South Carolina, which was occupied by the Federal army under Gen. Sherman early in the day, was laid waste by a terrible conflagration that raged through the afternoon and night.

Who burned Columbia? This ever since has been a debated question. Committees and commissions investigated it, the United States Congress was appealed to to answer it, yet to this day the question has not been settled.

Careful review of the evidence presented, a study of the narratives and diaries of those who were in the city at the time, and a knowledge of the spirit which actuated the men of the Federal army in their dealings with the people of South Carolina as a whole, leads to the conclusion that, though the first fires were started by the Confederate troops or the townspeople themselves in a well-meant effort to destroy the vast store of cotton that lay in the city's streets, the Federals must take the blame for the subsequent devastation.

They spread the blaze. Many of the soldiers, those of the better sort, tried to stem the flames and aid the stricken people; but the great mass of troops in the city, the men of the Fifteenth Corps under Gen. John A. Logan, wild with drink and inflamed by a long-standing grudge against South Carolina and her people, did their utmost to lay the place in ashes, and succeeded.

Gen. Sherman cannot justly be made to bear the whole blame. The destruction of all the government property there would have suited his taste, but the wholesale devastation at Columbia would not, if for no better reason than it would bring discredit to him personally.

However, whether or not he approved the burning of the city, he could not have prevented it. The soldiers, drunk with brandy which the Columbians had themselves supplied, were absolutely beyond restraint.

Raise Flag on Capitol.

It was daylight of February 17 when the few Confederate troops in Columbia, under Gen. G. T. Beauregard, began to withdraw from the city. With them went the leading citizens of the place, the governor, A. G. Magrath, and members of the legislature. The streets were filled with army wagons making to the rear, and with hundreds of private vehicles loaded topheavy with household goods being sent out of the city.

At the depot everything was bustle and confusion. Hundreds were seeking admission to the already crowded cars. Husbands were looking for wives, wives calling to husbands, and children screaming in fright.

Even at that early hour there was smoke over the city. Some cotton had been fired to prevent it falling into the hands of the Federals. Later in the morning the railroad station caught fire and was consumed, but it was on the outskirts of the town and the blaze did not spread. By that time the last train had gone north toward Chester and Charlotte.

While the Confederates were making good their retreat the Federals north of Columbia were busily engaged in bridging Broad River. In the night a brigade of Gen. C. R. Wood's division of the Fifteenth Corps, under Col. George A. Stone, of the Twenty-fifth Iowa Infantry, had been sent across to guard the bridge head. These men now advanced toward Columbia while the engineers launched their pontoons and began the construction of the bridge.

About a mile from the city Col. Stone was met by Mayor T. J. Goodwyn and three of the city's aldermen, who offered to surrender the place. After a short conference Columbia was formally turned over to the Federals.

Word of the surrender was sent back to Gen. Sherman, who had not yet crossed Broad River, and Stone's Brigade marched into the streets of the South Carolina capital. Col. Stone, accompanied by Capt. William B. Pratt, Gen. Logan's aid, planted the first United States flag on the State capitol.

Federal Army Drunk.

Meanwhile the army was patiently waiting the completion of the pontoon bridge over Broad River. Sherman was on the river bank, near where the engineers were at work, now pacing up and down among his officers, an unlighted cigar in his mouth, and now halting for a brief word with some of the generals around him.

At times he would sit down on a log and chop away at a stick with his pocket knife, then nervously start up and resume his walk.

Gen. Howard sat on a log reading a newspaper. Every few minutes he would call the general's attention to an article in the paper or read a passage aloud and make comment upon it.

When the bridge was completed the cavalcade rode rapidly toward Columbia, and entered the city's streets amid intense excitement. Negroes were grouped along the streets, cheering, singing and dancing in wild delight.

Though the advanced Federal troops had been in the place little more than an hour many of them were drunk. In the short absence of Col. Stone at the capitol, some of his men had found a store of liquors; the negroes and some of the other civilians, eager to gain the friendship of the soldiery, had brought out supplies of brandy. As the other troops entered they, too, imbibed freely.

"Whisky and wine flowed like water," wrote Maj. Charles W. Wills, of the 103d Infantry, in his diary, "and the whole division is drunk. This disgusts me. I think the city should be burned, but would like to see it done decently."

Whole City in Flames.

About 9 o'clock a fire broke out in the western part of the city and a stiff wind spread it rapidly. The Federal officers attempted to stay its progress, but could not get the intoxicated soldiers to do effective work. "The town was full of drunken negroes and the vilest vagabond soldiers, the veriest scum of the entire army * * *" wrote Maj. Gen. Woods, commanding the First Division of the Fifteenth Corps, in his official report of the campaign. "Every measure practicable was adopted to prevent the spreading of the fire; but owing to the fact that both citizens and soldiers were in no way disposed to have the scene closed, it was impossible to arrest the flames."

About the same hour (9 a. m.) several other fires appeared at scattered points in the city. These, too, grew rapidly, and soon it became apparent that the place was doomed. At midnight a member of the Sixteenth Corps, who had been in the city, returned to his command and reported: "The whole city is in flames and the whole army drunk. The place is swimming with liquor. The guards have been changed three times already. As fast as they are changed they get drunk. The fire companies brought out their engines and our men cut the hose to pieces. It is the biggest drunk and greatest fire I ever heard of."

For more than six hours the conflagration raged furiously. Pillaging gangs fired the heart of the town, then entered the houses and carried off all articles of value. The flames burst out in all quarters. The streets were crowded with helpless women and children, some only in night attire. Yet the weather was bitter cold, for South Carolina.

Agonized mothers, seeking their children, were rushing on all sides from the raging flames. Invalids had to be dragged from their beds, and lay exposed to the flames and smoke.

"I trust I shall never witness such a scene again," wrote Capt. D. P. Conyngham, of Sherman's staff." I was fired at for trying to save an unfortunate man from being murdered.

"The frequent shots on every side told that some victim had fallen. Shrieks, groans and cries of distress resounded from every side."

Nuns and Children Flee.

The flames bore down, unchecked, upon the Ursaline Convent and Academy, which Sherman had promised protection. The sisters had a large number of children in their care—many of them members of prominent families of the State—and at the first cry, "The convent is on fire," marshaled their charges and, aided by the parish priests, Frs. O'Connell and Lawrence, led them to a temporary refuge in the Catholic church.

It was a pitiful spectacle as the refugees made their way through the great crowds of drunken soldiery in narrow streets lighted by the roaring flames. The priest, with uplifted crucifix, headed the procession. Behind him followed the nuns, their pallid faces, black habit and quiet bearing in strange contrast to the scenes about them.

Then came the schoolgirls, many of them little tots, marching hand-in-hand with their older companions in fear that they might be torn away by the shouting men about them. Several of the sick, wrapped in blankets, made their way along as best they could.

This solemn procession was not interfered with. Sherman had provided a guard for the sisters and their charges, but it was not needed.

Ruin and Vandalism.

In the morning of February 18, Capt. Pepper, previously quoted, went into Columbia. On his way he met crowds of soldiers, who were yelling, singing, waving gold watches, handfuls of gold, jewelry and Confederate currency in the air and boasting of having burned the town. One was staggering under the weight of a huge basket filled high with silver plate.

As Pepper passed the lunatic asylum he was surrounded by hundreds of men, women and children, begging for protection. On the grounds attached to this building were thousands whom the fire had rendered houseless and homeless, congregated at the only place of refuge left in the city. Near-by a crowd of soldiers, accompanied by a performer seated at a piano, were singing "John Brown."

Near the new State house a large bonfire of tobacco, nearly 200 feet long, fifty feet wide and five feet high, was burning.

Around the new State house were evidences of the hate of the soldiers toward the State of South Carolina.

This building was unfinished. Most of the ornamental portion had not been removed from the boxes in which it had been brought there. There were the remains of fluted columns, capitals, entablatures, friezes and cornices of the finest Italian marble that had been destroyed by fire, defaced by blows from muskets and mashed by axes and hammers.

Even the monument erected by the State to the gallant dead of the Palmetto Regiment (First South Carolina) in the Mexican War, had not been spared.

At noon Pepper returned to his regiment, engaged in destroying railroad near the city. Close at hand was a vacant building containing a fine library belonging to the Rhett, Barnwell, Heywood and Middleton families. It was fired and burned in the presence, and without a word of remonstrance, of an officer commanding a brigade.

For two days the work of destruction was to be continued. On February 20 Sherman was to give the word that was to send his men farther into the heart of the Confederacy, the sword in one hand and the torch in the other.

FEDERAL TROOPS OCCUPY CITY OF CHARLESTON, S.C.
February 18.

Fifty years ago today the city of Charleston, S. C., which had been evacuated by the Confederates the night before, was occupied by the Federals, who had fruitlessly besieged it for two years.

The coming of Gen. Sherman's army in the rear—Columbia, the State capital, 100 miles northwest, had been occupied by the Federals on February 17—had forced Charleston's defenders to relinquish their hold upon the place.

Gen. W. H. Hardee, who after a retreat from Savannah in December, had gone to Charleston, had under him about 14,000 men. With this force he could have put up a stiff defense even in the face of an attack by Sherman, but his army eventually would have been forced to surrender. Hardee's force would be of more use in the field, so as early as February 14, when it was realized that Sherman must take Columbia, preparations were made for the withdrawal from Charleston.

Sumter Evacuated.

On February 16 Capt. Thomas A. Huguenin, commander of Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, was ordered by Gen. Hardee to prepare to evacuate his post. That night all the baggage of the officers and a force of laborers who had been at work on the fort were sent off to the city.

In order to conceal the proposed withdrawal from the Federals, who were watching and bombarding the place night and day from their batteries on Morris Island, at the entrance to the harbor, the regular routine was observed at Sumter during the day of the 17th. At sunrise a new battle flag was run up upon the staff, and at sunset was lowered to the sound of the evening gun—the last Confederate cannon to be fired from Sumter's walls.

At dusk all the usual preparations to repel a night attack were taken. Wire entanglements and bristling pikes were placed to protect the practicable parts of the gorge and sea face, and the light howitzers were run forward as if to meet a Federal boat attack. Then, after dark, the garrison of about 300 men, comprising two companies of the First South Carolina Regulars and three companies of the Thirty-second Georgia Volunteers, bade silent farewell to the historic old fort, boarded launches, and went to join their already retreating comrades within the city.

In the meantime Gen. Hardee had sent away as much of his ammunition and supplies as was practicable for him to move. Cannon had been withdrawn from advanced points. Rising smoke told of burning warehouses.

Jefferson Davis had given express orders that the cotton within the city should be destroyed. Therefore, Gen. Hardee, after putting the bulk of his troops in motion, ordered his rear guard to roll the cotton out of the storage houses and burn it. This was done. The burning cotton, piled high in the streets, soon set fire to adjacent buildings, and in the late hours of the night the city was afire in many places.

Citizens and soldiers struggled to combat the flames, but it was well into the day before they were subdued. By that time about a sixth of the city, mostly the lower business section, was destroyed.

Flag Raised Over Sumter.

All the little signs of withdrawal had not gone unnoticed by the Federals, and in the night of February 17 they bestirred themselves to unusual activity. A terrific bombardment, one of the heaviest of the siege, was rained upon the forts and works around Charleston and upon the batteries that marked the lower water front of the town.

When the flames arose within the city and it seemed positive that the Confederates were abandoning it, some of the gunners turned their pieces upon the place and dropped shot after shot into the blazing areas. This, no doubt, contributed to the spread of the flames.

When morning dawned the Federals saw that the Confederates had failed to withdraw their brass howitzers from the ramparts of Sumter and knew that the place had been abandoned. According to unofficial accounts, two boats set out for the goal, one from a Federal monitor off the bar and another from one of the batteries on Morris Island.

Conditions favored the landsmen, and, after a tight race, Lieut. John Hacket, of Company M, Third Rhode Island Heavy Artillery, clambered into the deserted fort and mounted the rampart. A few minutes later, about 9 o'clock, the Stars and Stripes flew over Sumter, the first time since Anderson was forced to capitulate in April, 1861. The flag was raised by Maj. John A. Hennessy, of the Fifty-second Pennsylvania Regiment.

By this time other parties of Federals had taken to boats and were rowing toward the inner harbor. Lieut. Col. Augustus G. Bennett, of the Twenty-first United States colored troops, in command at Morris Island, was first to land. Touching at Mills Wharf, he sent a formal demand for surrender to Mayor Charles Macbeth.

No attempt to advance into the city was made, for Col. Bennett had with him only four or five officers and twenty-two men.

At that hour Charleston was still in flames, though the fire companies were fighting hard to check them. About 11 o'clock a terrific explosion shook the city. A supply of abandoned ammunition at the Northeastern Railroad depot had been ignited, probably by boys playing with burning cotton, and between 150 and 200 persons, largely poor women and children, who had broken into the Confederate stores to get food, were buried in the ruins.

Scarcely had the detonation died away when, with another terrible roar, the magazine of the Confederate ram Charleston was fired and the craft blown to pieces. She had been moored in Cooper River, on the north of the city. The Confederates had previously blown up the ironclads Chicora and Palmetto and sunk a submarine torpedo boat, all three in Cooper River. (The torpedo boat and the ironclad Columbia, a new vessel that had been sunk in a creek near Charleston, were later raised by the Federals and added to the Northern fleet.)

By this time Col. Bennett received a note from Mayor Macbeth written before the latter had received Bennett's demand for surrender, notifying the Federals that the Confederates had gone. Other Federal troops having come up, Col. Bennett marched into Charleston and soon his men had taken full possession of the place and aided the citizens in extinguishing the fires. All the forts and batteries around Charleston were occupied, and before nightfall Brig. Gen. Alexander Schimmelfennig, commanding the northern district of the Department of the South, and Maj. Gen. Quincy A. Gillmore, the department commander, had moved into the city.

STARS AND STRIPES RAISED AT FORT ANDERSON.
February 19.

Fifty years ago today the Stars and Stripes were raised over Fort Anderson, last of the Confederate works defending Wilmington, N. C., on the lower Cape Fear River, which had been evacuated in the night.

The advance of an army corps under Gen. John M. Schofield, which had been landed on the coast for the purpose of taking the fort in the rear, and a three days' bombardment by ships of the Federal fleet under Admiral D. D. Porter, which had entered the river after the fall, on January 15, of Fort Fisher (at the river's mouth), had rendered the evacuation of Fort Anderson by its garrison inevitable.

The defenders of the fort had made a gallant resistance, however, in the face of heavy odds, keeping Porter's fleet at bay under very severe fire and not quitting the works until Schofield's force was upon them.

Physical obstacles had made the progress of the Federals upon Wilmington, twenty miles up the Cape Fear River, one of much labor. The first of this had fallen upon Admiral Porter, in getting his ships into the river. There were two channels, widely separated, and both shallow, crooked, and obstructed.

Fort Fisher, on the east of the river, had guarded the northern channel, New Inlet. Its fall was followed in three days by the evacuation of Fort Caswell, guarding the southern channel.

This had given the Federals complete control of the mouths of the river and of the village of Smithville, on its west bank above Fort Caswell, and other points where the water was deep enough for landing troops. But between them and Wilmington lay Fort Anderson, a very strong work on the west bank, ten miles above Smithville and six above New Inlet.

A Dummy Monitor.

The naval forces found the channels over the sandy bars at the river's entrance shallow, unbuoyed, obstructed in places with the wrecks of blockade runners, and strewn with torpedoes.

Only the lighter draft vessels could enter the first, and some of these were three days dragging their keels in sand and mud in clearing the bar.

When finally a channel had been cleared and heavy rains had raised the river's level, heavier vessels crossed New Inlet bar, including the monitor Montauk.

With a force of about twenty ships over the bar, Admiral Porter was ready to push on up the river, moving in conjunction with Schofield's troops. All being ready on February 17, the leading ships had moved up and begun a bombardment of Fort Anderson.

This bombardment was heavy for two days, but its moral effect was greater than the physical. This was partly due to a ruse employed by Admiral Porter, of a sort characteristic of that commander.

The ruse consisted of the employment of a dummy monitor, such as Admiral Porter had first employed in the siege of Vicksburg. The manner in which the original dummy had passed the Confederate works had disconcerted the men in the Vicksburg batteries. When the character of the "turreted monster," as the vessel was termed by them, was made known, Vicksburg's defenders were ridiculed by the Southern press for allowing themselves to be gulled.

The moral effect of the dummy employed in the Cape Fear River was all that could have been wished by its projectors. The bogus ship, made of a scow, canvas and barrels, was put in charge of Lieut. W. B. Cushing—of Albemarle fame—and that officer, doubtless relishing the adventure, placed it in a position in which it would have its greatest effect.

Killed by a Torpedo.

Starting at night, with a flotilla of small boats, Cushing convoyed the dummy monitor to a position near the fort and cast it off to float upstream with the flood tide.

The "monitor" passed near enough to the fort for its dim outline to be seen. A heavy fire was directed at it, but it kept its way, unharmed, until it grounded on the east bank of the river, within range of batteries below Wilmington and on their flank—a position that, occupied by a genuine monitor, would have made the batteries untenable.

Discerning the black form of the dummy in the uncertain light of dawn, the defenders of the upper works withdrew into Wilmington, leaving Fort Anderson alone to guard the river against the Yankees.

Schofield's advance sealed the fate of Fort Anderson and opened the way for Porter's ships to follow the dummy monitor up the river to Wilmington (which was occupied by Schofield February 22).

But the advance of the fleet was not without hazard and loss of life. The enemy was active in employing torpedoes, and as a final blow at the Federals they released a large number on the ebb tide the day the fort was evacuated. A negro had warned Admiral Porter that the torpedoes would be sent down, and preparations were made to catch them by stringing nets across the river.

This method resulted in the gathering in of a number of barrels charged with explosives, which were exploded harmlessly by musketry from the banks. One, however, got past the nets and floated among the fleet, where it was secured. An officer in a small boat fired his pistol into it, exploding it, with the result that the boat was destroyed, the officer seriously wounded, and two men killed.

SHERMAN'S ARMY LEAVES RUINS OF COLUMBIA.
February 20.

Fifty years ago today Gen. Sherman's army marched away from the blackened ruins of Columbia, the capital of South Carolina, on the second stage of the great Carolina campaign.

Thus far the Federals had swept everything before them, and had made such rapid progress from Savannah north that the Confederates, weak and scattered, had been unable to bring their forces to bear against them.

Columbia had been seized, and with its capture Charleston had been evacuated. The Confederates who had held Columbia, scarcely 10,000 of them under Gen. G. T. Beauregard, had retreated north, along the railroad, to Charlotte, N. C., 100 miles distant; those comprising the garrison of Charleston, an army of 14,000 under Gen. W. D. Hardee, had gone to Cheraw, 130 miles north of Charleston and about eighty-five miles northeast of Columbia. At those two points they halted and waited to see what Sherman's next move was to be.

The ultimate Federal objective was Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina. Sherman proposed to keep the Confederates guessing as long as possible as to the route over which his army was to march. This would prevent Hardee and Beauregard concentrating to meet him. Not that Sherman was afraid to give the combined forces battle, but he preferred to fight on his own ground, where he might totally crush them, as he afterward was to do.

So for the first few days the movements of the Federals from Columbia were all northward along the railroad to Charlotte. Later on, the army was to make a sharp divergence to the east, leaving only the cavalry to keep up the deception of a movement against Charlotte.

Leave Food for Columbians.

With a large part of Columbia in ruins as the result of a disastrous fire on February 17, and with practically all of the surrounding country swept clean of provisions by Sherman's "bummers," the citizens of the city were fearful that when the army marched away they would be reduced to a state of starvation. The mayor, T. J. Goodwyn, went to Sherman and asked him what could be done to feed the large population that had been left homeless and destitute by the fire.

According to Gen. O. O. Howard's account, Sherman said to the mayor: "Go to Howard. Howard runs the religion of this army;" and then, less briskly, "Go to him; he commands the troops that hold the city. He will treat you better than one of your own generals."

Soon after this interview with Sherman the mayor went to Howard and put before him the supply problem. Gen. Howard at once ordered that a herd of cattle which the Federal commissary had gathered, be divided and half given to the mayor. He also sent half of his supply of rations to the new State house, to be stored there for the use of the impoverished people.

"I told him (the mayor)," Gen. Howard wrote, "that if I were he I would organize foraging parties from the inhabitants of the city and send them out into portions of the country which our foragers had not reached and have them make forced loans. Years afterward I met the same gentleman. He told me that he had followed the advice and that the plan had worked so well that there was no want."

Before evacuating the city the Federals destroyed all of the factories, powder mills, machine shops, the arsenal, and captured ammunition. Much of this Confederate property was in the outlying sections and had escaped destruction in the great fire. This work being completed on the 19th, the order to move was given.

Early the next morning the troops were marching northward along the railroad. The Fifteenth and Seventeenth Corps, comprising the Federal right wing under Gen. Howard, swung directly north from Columbia, while the Twentieth and Fourteenth Corps, comprising the left wing, under Gen. H. W. Slocum, together with the cavalry under Gen. Judson Kilpatrick, followed a more westerly route.

Soldiers Burn and Pillage.

The troops had scarcely taken the road when outrages such as had marked the early part of the campaign were resumed. The homes of civilians were burned, furniture was demolished and money and jewelry stolen.

The whole Carolina march greatly exceeded the march from Atlanta to Savannah in the extent of the depredations upon the civilians and the destruction of private property. Capt. D. P. Conyngham, of Sherman's staff, wrote of it that "As for the wholesale burnings, pillage, devastation committed in South Carolina, magnify all I have said about Georgia some fiftyfold, and then throw in an occasional murder, and you have a pretty good idea of the whole thing."

Finally Gen. Howard was constrained to take a hand in an attempt to bring this virtual reign of terror to an end. On February 20 he wrote to his corps commanders:

"I desire to call your attention to the fact that some of our soldiers have been committing the most outrageous robberies of watches, jewelry, etc. A case has come to my notice where a watch and several articles of jewelry were stolen by a foraging party under the eye of the commissioned officer in charge. Another where a brute had violently assaulted a lady by striking her, and had then robbed her of a valuable gold watch.

"In one instance money was stolen to the amount of $150, and another, where an officer with a foraging party had allowed his men to take rings off the fingers of ladies in his presence. Today a soldier was found plundering, arrested, placed under the guard of one of Gen. Corse's orderlies, and was liberated by some of his comrades who had arms in their hands, and who threatened the life of the guard.

"These outrages must be stopped at all hazards, and the thieves and robbers who commit them be dealt with severely and summarily. I am inclined to think that there is a regularly organized banditti who commit these outrages and who share the spoils. I call upon you and upon all the officers and soldiers under you, who have one spark of honor or respect for the profession which they follow, to help me put down these infamous proceedings, and to arrest the perpetrators."

For a while matters improved in Gen. Howard's command, but as Gen. Sherman did not particularly disapprove of the acts of his "bummers," and as many of the lesser officers were hand in hand with them, the conduct of the army as a whole grew worse rather than better as the campaign progressed.

On February 21 practically the whole of the Federal army was to be concentrated near Winnsboro, thirty miles north of Columbia. The foragers from the left wing had entered the town and, before any of the organized bodies of troops arrived, had managed to set several of the houses afire. Before the blaze got beyond control the advance of Slocum's men were on the scene and, headed by their general, succeeded in keeping down the blaze. It is told that Gens. Slocum, Williams, Geary, Pardee and Barnum did such effective work "that they managed to burn their whiskers and scorch their clothes."

Sherman believed that he had now gone far enough on the direct road toward Charlotte to deceive the Confederates, so he ordered his generals to turn sharply to the east and strike for Cheraw.

MAJ. GEN. CROOK AND MAJ. GEN. KELLEY SEIZED.
February 21.

Fifty years ago today Maj. Gen. George Crook, commander of the Federal Military Department of West Virginia, and Brevet Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Kelley, commanding a division of infantry, and second in rank in the department, were captured in their beds at Cumberland, Md., headquarters of the department, by a small band of Confederate cavalry under Lieut. Jesse C. McNeill.

McNeill's exploit was one of the most dashing of the many wild enterprises of the younger Confederates who served in the Shenandoah Valley and the West Virginia country, and caused not a little chagrin to the Federals. For this reason not much information about the capture reached the Northern press through military channels.

That a party of hostile cavalry could ride into a fortified town held by about 5,000 troops and make off with two officers of highest rank in the military department, reflected no great credit on the forces holding the town.

The audacity of the enterprise was great, and when all the conditions bearing upon it were weighed its success was not so remarkable as it might have appeared at first sight.

No Confederates were known to be within 100 miles of Cumberland. The weather was inclement and the mountain roads of West Virginia, by which the raiders approached the town, were in a condition not favorable to rapid riding. The guards at Cumberland did their duty in a sense of security, little dreaming that they would be confronted by an enemy.

These things were well known to young McNeill, who was a daredevil youth, ready to take long chances. He was attached to Rosser's cavalry, a part of the Confederate force serving under Gen. Jubal A. Early in the Shenandoah Valley.

With the coming of winter Gen. Early had been obliged to scatter his cavalry in order that forage might be found for the horses. Rosser's men crossed the mountains to the counties on the west, and there managed to find subsistence for man and beast.

Guided by a Resident.

It was while waiting impatiently for the coming of spring and the resumption of military activity that young McNeill conceived the idea of a kidnaping raid to Cumberland.

With thirty picked men he started on February 18 for his goal. The ride was one that would not soon be forgotten by the men making it. The mountains were deep in snow, the trails slippery with ice, and the many streams across the roads dowing high between frozen banks.

Reaching Moorfield on the afternoon of February 20, the raiders took the road through Romney. It was 2 o'clock in the morning of February 21 when, having come quietly down out of the hills and crossed the Potomac, they rode into Cumberland.

The town was wrapped in complete stillness. The few sentries were not alert. All those in the way of the raiders were passed without challenge.

Proceeding to the railroad station, the raiders captured the watchman there and cut the telegraph lines. They then separated into two parties, one of which, led by McNeill, proceeded to the hotel in which Gen. Crook made his headquarters. The other proceeded to Gen. Kelley's headquarters.

There was no need to search for these places, as every foot of the way was known to a guide, Charles J. Dalley, of Cumberland, by whom the details of the plan had been worked out well in advance.

Arriving at the headquarters of Gen. Crook, the raiders seized a sentry, having bound and gagged him, they proceeded softly about their business.

Lieut. McNeill went directly to Gen. Crook's room. There was no sentry in the corridor and the door was unlocked. The Federal commander woke to find a pistol at his head. He was ordered to dress and to make no noise.

Although Gen. Crook had fought many a hard battle and led many a desperate cavalry raid in West Virginia, he knew that resistance was useless. He dressed so quietly that officers in the next room were not awakened.

In less than ten minutes he was mounted on a horse that the raiders had brought, ready saddled, to the hotel door. In a few minutes the other detachment, with Gen. Kelley mounted in their midst, joined McNeill. They had encountered no difficulty in securing the person of Gen. Kelley, after taking the sentry at his quarters. They had also captured Capt. Thayer Melvin, Gen. Kelley's assistant adjutant general.

With the three officers among them and the two private soldiers, sentries from the generals' respective headquarters, the raiders started off into the mountins.

They had been but twenty minutes in the town, and had not fired a shot or spoken a loud word.

About ten minutes after their departure a negro watchman, who had escaped them at Gen. Crook's hotel, summoned courage to come out of hiding and raise an alarm.

Amazement was stamped on every face when it was found that the two ranking officers of the department were gone—spirited away as if taken up on a magic carpet.

Orders were issued for a hot pursuit but it was daylight before a cavalry command rode out toward Moorefield.

The pursuit proved fruitless. The Federals arrived at Moorefield an hour after McNeill and his men had passed through the place. Riding up the south branch of the Potomac, the raiders made good their escape.

In three days they were at Staunton, Gen. Early's headquarters at the upper end of the valley, with their prisoners. Broad grins wreathed the coustenances of Early's men as they described the results of McNeill's raid. The young officer was popular. He came of fighting stock. The elder McNeill had been one of Early's boldest cavalrymen and had met death in the hard fighting of the previous autumn in the valley.

Gen. Early interviewed his distinguished prisoners before sending them on to Richmond, discussing with Gen. Crook the battle of Cedar Creek, in which the Army of West Virginia, under Crook, had been swept from its camps by Early's surprise attack on Sheridan's left wing.

Gen. Lee, on learning of the capture of the two generals, congratulated young McNeill. Secretary of War Staunton, at Washington, on hearing of their capture, wished Gens. Crook and Kelley summarily dropped from active service. Gen. Grant intervened and set about to secure an exchange for them. In March they were back within the Federal lines at City Point, and Gen. Crook was given command of a division of cavalry under Sheridan for the final chapter of the campaign against Lee.